

# ALL THE YEAR ROUND



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### SENSATIONAL ALLEGATIONS

Made Against the Mason Jars for Canning Food Articles.

Powerful Organizations Go on Record Against Zinc Caps.

In a recent issue the Portland Telegram said:

"Many citizens have put themselves on record as strenuously opposed to the use of Mason fruit jars in putting up food articles. State and Normal organizations have been moved to take decided action against the use of zinc caps in food canning.

It was on October 24, 1903, that S. E. Lowe, of Florence, Ore., wrote the following:

"Florence, Ore., Oct. 24, 1903.—Your favor of October 20 duly received and noted. Replying, beg to say that the occurrence mentioned in your letter resulted from the eating canned raspberries put up in the Mason jar. The fruit was at least a year old, and a short time prior to its use had been transported over a rough road about 12 miles. The accumulated mold in the jar had probably been intermingled with the berries in transportation which caused the difficulty in question.

"The younger child (6 years of age) ate a large saucer of this fruit, and, having an overdose threw it up and was soon over its effects; the other child did not partake of as much, and her case was critical, and only by the constant and persistent efforts of a physician was she restored.

(Signed) S. E. LOWE.

The Telegram's account of the affair, published at the time in the dispatches of the day, was as follows:

"Eugene, Ore., Oct. 19.—A report has reached Eugene from Florence, at the mouth of the Siuslaw river, that Hattie, the 14-year-old daughter of S. E. Lowe, and her brother, George, were poisoned by eating canned raspberries last Thursday, and it was only by hard work that the girl's life was saved. The boy was taken seriously ill, but vomited soon after and recovered before his sister did. The fruit which caused the trouble was put up by the family last year. The two children opened it and ate some of the fruit about 10 o'clock Thursday, and commenced to feel ill a few hours later. A physician was called in the evening, and by working hard all night, with the assistance of their family, he succeeded in saving their lives."

It was but natural that the Mason fruit jar would come in for critical examination, the result of which is the by no means mild censure of J. W. Bailey, the State Dairy and Food Commissioner for Oregon at the time, and the International Pure Food Congress at St. Louis last year, which latter body came out with renewed vigor this year at the Lewis and Clark Fair, upon the dangers of using zinc chloride in soldering tin used in canning foods. The Food Commissioners' statement is as follows:

"Office of J. W. Bailey, State Dairy and Food Commissioner, room 19, Brecken building, Portland, Ore., October 25, 1904.—The two Mason jar caps have been examined, the metal of the new Mason cap was found to be pure zinc. The small pinhole in the old Mason cap were undoubtedly caused by the action of vegetable acids. As a result the fruit in the jar must have been greatly contaminated with poisonous zinc compounds.

"I regard the use of jars with zinc caps as very unsanitary and even dangerous.

Yours very truly,

J. W. BAILEY,

State Dairy and Food Commissioner.

The appended statement is from James H. Fisk, an analytic chemist and assayer of note of this city:

"Chemical Laboratory and Assay Office, 204 1/2 Washington street, Portland, Ore., December 2, 1904.—From my analysis of the zinc porcelain lined cap which is ordinarily used in sealing the Mason jar, I state without hesitation that the poison referred to in the incident of the Lowe family was produced not only by the mold of the fruit, but most likely by the fruit juices having been in contact with the zinc in the cap. The transportation of the jar probably caused the entire contents to be contaminated by the poison.

"In my opinion many cases of sickness, and even deaths, may be discovered as the result of zinc compound poisoning, if properly traced to its source.

This danger has been recognized to such a great extent of late that at the International Pure Food Congress held at St. Louis, September of this year, the Pure Food Commissioners assembled

at their eighth annual convention unanimously resolved that no zinc chloride should be used in soldering tin for use in canning foods, and that no solder should be in contact with the contents of the can.

"So earnest was their desire to prevent the possibility of even a few drops of zinc chloride or solder from coming in contact with the food. Your very truly

"J. H. FISK."

The following resolution was passed unanimously at the ninth annual Pure Food Congress of the National Association of Pure Food Commissioners of the United States, held at Portland, Ore., July, 1905:

"Resolved that the use of zinc caps in canning fruits and vegetables in glass jars or other receptacles is condemned as unsanitary and unhealthy, owing to the danger of the acids of the fruits and vegetables forming poisonous compounds when in contact with the zinc."

Regarding the action of acids upon Zinc, C. L. Schmidt, the chemist of Woodard, Clarke & Co., wrote as follows:

"Portland, Ore., Oct. 14, 1905.—Zinc will dissolve in the weakest acids disengaging hydrogen and forming acid compounds. These compounds are poisonous.

"Even common salt water will dissolve zinc to some extent.

"All vegetables and fruits contain acids.

"Zinc being dissolved by the acids will form compounds evolving hydrogen, which assist in decomposing other compounds such as oxalates.

"These oxalates will form a new poisonous compound.—Oxalic acid. "Crude zinc usually contains lead; also arsenic and other chemicals.

"Zinc being dissolved by fruit or vegetable acids also liberates other impurities when present, therefore, it is not advisable, but extremely dangerous to eat food that has been preserved in any vessel or jar whose cap is made of zinc, if in contact with the zinc any length of time. Yours very truly,

WOODARD, CLARKE & CO.,  
Per C. L. Schmidt, Chemist."

Well, Well!

A golfer was observed to smite the ball with peculiar fury. His opponent noticed that there was something on the ball. "What is it?" he asked. "It's a portrait of my mother-in-law," was the answer, accompanied with a mighty hit, "and it does me good to strike it like that!"—London News.

Naturally.



Wiggs—I went to a memory school last year.

Waggs—You don't say? What was the name of it?

Wiggs—I can't remember.—San Francisco Call.

No Wonder.

"Julia" yelled the poet, "why don't you keep that kid quiet? What's the matter with it?"

"I'm sure I don't know," replied his patient wife. "I'm singing one of your lullabies to the little darling."—Philadelphia Press.

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